

June 21, 2005

House Appropriations Restores Perkins Funding

IMPACT ON PERKINS: After the overwhelmingly supportive vote to reauthorize Perkins earlier this year, it was reassuring that the House Appropriations Committee also voted in favor of continued CTE funding. Despite being eliminated in the President's budget proposal, the **Perkins basic state grant and Tech Prep were restored and level funded at \$1.3 billion**. However, the Tech Prep Demonstration Grants and the Occupation and Employment Information Program (Section 118) were eliminated. If past years are any indicator though, these programs could be restored in the Senate's appropriations bill.

The Appropriations bill moved quickly and much earlier than many of the most recent Congressional sessions. On June 9, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education held its initial markup which included all education programs categorized under discretionary funds. The bill then went to full Committee on June 16th. Highlights of the bill passed out of the House Appropriations Committee are below. The bill is pending a floor vote.

SUMMARY: Despite this positive note for Perkins, this is proving to be a very tough year for education. While an overall increase of \$115 million (0.2%) was allocated to education programs, this is the smallest increase in the past decade. Level funding for any program is considered a victory in this environment.

The Committee restored \$3.6 billion in education cuts proposed by President Bush, including Perkins CTE, Perkins TRIO, GEAR UP, regional education laboratories, and LEAP programs. Most of the President's initiatives were not funded; the President's teacher incentive fund received \$100 million instead of the \$500 million requested.

During the full Committee markup, Representative Obey (WI-D) offered an amendment of \$11.8 billion to restore and provide additional funding for multiple programs, however the amendment failed by party line vote. The final committee bill eliminates twenty-three programs, totaling \$500 million. The largest program cut was the elimination of the \$250 million comprehensive school reform program, and smaller program cuts included art in education, dropout prevention and gifted and talented education.

There were a few programs that received increases - Pell grants were increased by \$1 billion including \$200 million to increase the maximum grant award by \$50 to \$4100, Title I of No Child Left Behind received a \$100 million increase and IDEA state grants received a \$150 million increase.

NEXT STEPS: This bill is expected to move quickly, possibly making it to the House floor next week. While there are no amendments to report at this time, it is expected that Representative Obey will offer another amendment for additional funding to education and other programs.

Despite the fact that Perkins funding was restored in the Committee markup, it is still critical that the CTE community convey the need for and support of a fully funded Perkins Act to members of the House. To contact your Representative, visit <http://www.house.gov/>.

To see the markup, visit

http://appropriations.house.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=PressReleases.Detail&PressRelease_id=497.

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS: The Senate Labor, Health and Education Appropriations Subcommittee is planning to take up their bill in July, however this target date could easily be pushed till after August recess. We will continue to keep you updated.

It is expected that the Senate allocations will be as lean as the House's with additional programs marked for elimination. However because of the unanimous vote to reauthorize Perkins legislation, we are hopeful that it will be restored in the Senate bill as well.

House Democrats Propose "New Partnership"

At a briefing on June 14, House Education and the Workforce Committee Democrats and Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), joined together to introduce a new plan designed to strengthen the nation's schools in a proposal titled "New Partnership for America's Future." This initiative comes on the heels of Committee Ranking Member George Miller's (D-CA) introduction of the "[The Teacher Excellence for All Children \(TEACH\) Act of 2005](#)" which is designed to attract and retain high quality teachers for the nation's schools.

The new proposal focuses on five specific steps ranging from preschool to higher education to accomplish the Democrat's goal of strengthening schools: boosting college opportunity and affordability, improving teacher quality, funding key education laws such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), school modernization and safety, and expanding high quality preschool opportunities.

While the funding source for this proposal has not been identified, Rep. Miller said that they will support financing the program with "whatever it takes." To read more about this plan and to read the statements of the participating Representatives, visit http://housedemocrats.gov/news/librarydetail.cfm?library_content_id=424.

Perkins Reauthorization Discussions Begin at Staff Level

After a long pause, the discussions to move Perkins reauthorization another step forward are beginning this week. Staff in each chamber is expected to be meeting to review the content of the other chamber's bill (so the Senate will review H.R. 366 and the House will review S. 250). As staff familiarizes themselves with both proposals, they are beginning to think through preferred positions on the differences between the two bills. There is no word yet as to when conferees will be appointed, nor when official conference will begin.

Building on a side by side developed by Brustein and Manasevit, NASDCTEc prepared a thorough legislative side by side that can be found at: <http://www.careertech.org/reauthorization.asp>. This side by side provides a detailed legislative language comparison of H.R. 366 and S. 250. A side by side focused on state issues is forthcoming. Also, ACTE and NASDCTEc are sending up a top 10 conference priority list up to the staff this week. When it is finalized, it will be posted on the NASDCTEc website.